



Marine Fishes

Hawaiian surf sardine

Iso hawaiiensis

‘Iao or

Hawaiian silverside

Atherinomorus insularum

Nehu or

Hawaiian anchovy

Encrasicolina purpurea

SPECIES STATUS:

IUCN Red List – Not Considered
Endemic

SPECIES INFORMATION: These are all relatively small, silvery, schooling planktivores. ‘Iao and Hawaiian surf sardines are atherinids that attach their eggs by filaments to aquatic plants. Nehu (Hawaiian anchovy) lay oval, floating eggs that hatch in a couple of days.

DISTRIBUTION: They are found throughout the State.

ABUNDANCE: ‘Iao are looked for in surveys of coral reef fishes in the Main and Northwestern Hawaiian Islands by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The others are not formally surveyed. There is little quantitative evidence of decline.

LOCATION AND CONDITION OF KEY HABITAT: They all occur in shallow water near the shoreline. Nehu especially can also be found in estuaries.

THREATS:

- They are fished commercially and recreationally;
- Introduced baitfish species may compete with the native species for resources;
- Coastal water quality may also be a threat in many areas but needs research.

CONSERVATION ACTIONS: Regulations set maximum catch at one gallon (four liters) for Nehu and nets over 50 feet (15 meters) are allowed only for commercial fishers. In addition to common statewide and marine conservation actions, specific actions include:

- Restoration of habitat;
- Maintain healthy populations with appropriate fishing regulations and education.

MONITORING:

- Continue and expand surveys of population and distribution in known and likely habitats.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES:

- Improve understanding of factors affecting the species population size.

References:

Gulko D. 2005. Hawaii Endemic Species Status Chart spreadsheet. Honolulu, HI: Hawai'i Division of Aquatic Resources.

Tinker S. 1978. Fishes of Hawaii. Honolulu HI: Hawaiian Service, Inc. 532 pp.